

## Did someone say “survey”???

The Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (Commission) is embarking on a groundbreaking survey of Ohio pretrial practices this summer. The Commission has a team of interns, representing several universities, assigned to the project.

The Commission coordinated the effort with staff from the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Ohio Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, the Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association, and the Ohio Association for Court Administration, among others. The survey team has contacted local court officials to schedule phone interviews to conduct the survey. Following this vibrant survey process, the researchers at the Commission will compile results and produce a report for presentation and sharing in fall 2019.

The ambitious survey supplements the prior work of the Commission on bail practices and pretrial services in a meaningful and credible way to better understand pretrial processes in Ohio. The robust information from the survey, for the first time, will give practitioners, policy makers and others first-hand, fresh and powerful aggregate information about the current status of pretrial services in our state.

More information on the Commission’s work on Bail Practices and Pretrial Services is summarized on page 2. Enjoy the summer! — *Sara Andrews*



Pictured (left to right)

Haley R. Bernstein, University of Maryland – Expected May 2022

Ruby Yearling, University of Michigan – Expected May 2022

Nupoor Goyal, University of Michigan – Expected May 2022

Not pictured:

Micah Clark Moody, University of Chicago – Expected May 2022

Brooke Bowerman, The Ohio State University 2019 and Vanderbilt University Law School – Expected 2022



In April of 2016, the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission (Commission), in an effort to affirm that Ohio is holding people for the right reasons prior to trial, sought technical assistance from the National Institute of Corrections and created an Ad Hoc Committee on Bail and Pretrial Services. The Ad Hoc Committee's goal was to ensure Ohio's bail system maximizes appropriate placement for defendants, protects the presumption of innocence, maximizes appearance at court hearings and maximizes public safety. The 34-member Ad Hoc Committee was comprised of a member of the Ohio Senate, Judges, Court Administrators, Prosecutors, Defense Attorneys, a Sheriff, a Jail Administrator, Pretrial Services personnel, Clerks of Courts, Victim Advocates and Bail Bondsmen.

In June 2017, the Commission unanimously favorably voted to accept the [Final Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee](#). The recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee are designed to be holistic and focus on achieving consistency, fairness and efficiency in the pretrial system while decreasing the reliance on monetary bail. The recommendations also promote consistent and uniform practices that realize fundamental fairness and promote public safety among counties and courts within counties. The Commission's study and work on bail practices and pretrial services inspired legislation in the 132nd Ohio General Assembly, Sub.HB439 (Dever, Ginter) and SB274 (McColley). The Commission also produced a [Bail Practices and Pretrial Services Addendum Report](#) to estimate cost for those legislatively drafted provisions.

In the interest of continuing the Commission's work to promote efficiencies and consistency in Ohio's pretrial system while decreasing the reliance on monetary bail as the primary release mechanism we applied for and received a federal grant in collaboration with the Office of Criminal Justice Services. The grant project began in spring 2019 and we are working with a variety of courts with a focus on data collection for bail and pretrial services.

Lastly, influenced by the Sentencing Commission Recommendations and Report from June 2017, the Commission on the Rules of Practice and Procedure proposed a number of changes to the Rules of Evidence and the Rules of Criminal Procedure, including Rule 46(B). Subsequently, the Chief Justice created a [Task Force to Examine the Ohio Bail System](#). Sara Andrews, the Director of the Sentencing Commission was appointed to the task force and a final report is expected soon.

#### Contact Us:

Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission  
65 South Front Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3431  
[www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/Sentencing](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/Sentencing)  
[sara.andrews@sc.ohio.gov](mailto:sara.andrews@sc.ohio.gov)

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\*the Commission is assisted by its Advisory Committee, a [complete list is here](#).